

CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY FEATURING ECUMENICAL CHARISMATIC SPEAKER

January 19, 2001 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) –

Cedarville University in Ohio (formerly Cedarville College prior to September 2000) has scheduled Pastor Jim Cymbala of the Brooklyn Tabernacle as the featured speaker for their annual Pastors Summit and Winter Enrichment Conference January 24-25.

This is another example of the rapid slide toward ecumenical compromise among fundamental Baptist institutions.

Cedarville University professes to be a fundamental Baptist institution and has long had the support of groups such as the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches. In fact, Cedarville's deep compromise reflects that which has pervaded the GARBC at large. The school's stated purpose is "to offer an education consistent with biblical truth. ... To undergird the student in the fundamentals of the Christian faith, and to stimulate him to evaluate knowledge in the light of scriptural truth...." Cedarville's statement of faith includes the following: "We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit are completed and are not applicable to the work of the Holy Spirit today. ... We believe in Biblical separation from all forms of ecclesiastical apostasy."

That being the case, how can Cedarville bring in Jim Cymbala, a man who is charismatic in doctrine and extremely ecumenical in practice? The Brooklyn Tabernacle's statement of faith says, "We believe the baptism of the Holy Spirit is for all believers as a definite endowment of power for service and is subsequent to, and separate from, conversion." They also say that all the gifts of the Spirit are for today. That is in direct contradiction to Cedarville's statement. Furthermore, Brooklyn Tabernacle's choir is not only contemporary and jazzy but is extremely ecumenical. You will find them performing for Charismatics, New Evangelicals, Catholics, you name it. Pastor Cymbala's books are recommended by ecumenical leaders such as Bill Bright and Jack Hayford. Pastor Cymbala and other charismatic leaders are conducting "Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire" conferences in various cities this year, spreading their charismatic-ecumenical doctrines and promoting CCM.

We do not question whether Jim Cymbala and the members of the Brooklyn Tabernacle know and love the Lord. That is not a judgment we can make. It appears that many people have been saved through their ministries, and we

rejoice in that. The same is true for Billy Graham or any number of other ecumenists. We don't question their sincerity or their spiritual enthusiasm, but we must refuse to associate with them because of biblical doctrine and practice.

How can Cedarville make alliance with the charismatic/ecumenical Cymbala and the Brooklyn Tabernacle? The answer is that the school has been captivated by the philosophy of neutralism and spiritual pragmatism and is well down the path of ecumenism. The Bible warns that two cannot walk together except they be agreed (Amos 3:3). This means that Cedarville agrees with Jim Cymbala; and by their uncritical association with him they are supporting the wide charismatic ecumenical movement which is doubtless the glue of the end times apostate one-world "church." They are fundamentalist in profession but New Evangelical in practice.

Beware of schools which profess to be fundamentalist and Baptist but which are neither in practice. Beware of the leaven of compromise which is flooding into fundamental Baptist churches, schools, evangelistic and mission institutions. It is not the time to cover ones eyes and pretend that all is well. It is not the time to keep quiet about error and compromise. By refusing to speak out against compromise in their own ranks, God's people pave the road to apostasy.

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